

STENNIS, John

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Sen. Stennis Backs CIA, Wants It Strengthened

U.S. SENATOR JOHN STENNIS

Instead of stripping the Central Intelligence Agency of its power, as some here advocate, I think that we ought to strengthen it. To find out what the Communists are doing, saying, and planning, you must go where the Communists are, and that's exactly what the CIA does.

In all of the student organizations which received money from the CIA, not one individual in any of them was told what to believe, or what to say. We merely spent some money pay the way of students to international meetings outside the United States. We chose those who believed in our cause, our form of government, and who were articulate and were willing to espouse their views at these international meetings. They also listened to what the Communists were saying and doing.

I have been to many places in the world, and in every country I made a special point to visit our CIA representative where I got very valuable and reliable information. My knowledge of the CIA activities comes from a personal checking on them. I have used their information and their work many times

to help me as a member of the United States Senate.

We dislike the idea of spying because we are an open society people, but under present conditions we have to have this type activity.

Our courts have gone so far as to say that a person cannot be fired as a school teacher, for instance, merely because he is a Communist. Are we to curtail or restrict or limit our one organization that attempts to ferret out abroad the activities of these same Communists? How ridiculous could we become!

The U-2 plane operated by the CIA could fly 80,000 feet. It was one of the best, most far-reaching, and most valuable programs military-wise that we have ever had. It saved us hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars. It enabled us to find out many of the plans that might be used against us. It is a striking illustration of the absolute necessity for activities of this kinds. So I say, instead of criticizing and trying to restrict it or tear down the CIA, I am backing it to the very limit and instead want to strengthen it.

Stennis, John
CIA 2-04.2 students

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